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have access to at present ; but a far better work might easily be made by taking this for a basis, and extending it according to certain principles of analogy, which might be easily settled. Though the definitions are generally correct, the author has frequently introduced, without any distinguishing mark, expressions, which no native, educated Englishman or American would think of using in conversation or in writing. Thus a German who should attempt to compose in English, relying on the authority of Sporschil, would be sometimes led into very ludicrous phraseology. Sometimes important meanings of words are wholly omitted, as for instance, *Schonung* is correctly defined *indulgence*, *forbearance*, *connivance* ; but it also means, *a preserve* or *enclosure*, and this meaning is not found in Sporschil. It would not be difficult to increase the list of similar omissions, and perhaps those of greater consequence ; but it would be unjust to make them a matter of reproach to Sporschil, who has really taken a very important step towards a good German-English Dictionary. But we would recommend, that the labors of Sporschil should be revised by some competent English scholar, who is at the same time familiar with the language and literature of Germany. The great demand for a German-English Dictionary, on account of the increased and increasing attention bestowed on German literature, would justify a publisher in risking its publication. To give the best security for the thorough execution of such a task, it should be intrusted to the joint labors of a native German, and a native English or American scholar. We sincerely hope, both for our own convenience and that of many others, that such a work will be speedily accomplished.

8. — *Southern Literary Messenger*. Vol. V. No. 12. Richmond : T. W. White. 8vo. pp. 72.

WE always promise ourselves no small degree of pleasure from the pages of this well-managed magazine. We are led to refer to it, at the present time, by a judicious and scholarly stricture in the number for last month, upon a work noticed in the last number of our journal, — the recent translation of the “*Tusculan Questions*” of Cicero. Knowing it to be always our purpose, that our criticisms shall be just and fair, and that, if they err on either side, it shall be on that of indulgence, we are not in the habit of recurring to them for the purpose of defence against complaints, to which, in any quarter, they may

have been thought obnoxious. But, in the present instance, some pains have been taken to prosecute in the newspapers an appeal from our judgment, as if it had been unreasonably severe ; and letters have been published, addressed to the translator, on the subject of his work, by no less than four gentlemen of the most unquestionable eminence in our republic of letters. With one exception, however, they were all written before our notice of the book, and are marked by a degree of reserve, upon the question, which we took up, respecting its character as a correct and adequate translation ; and, indeed, how hastily they were prepared, may be guessed from the fact, that one of them, emanating from an authority to whose deliberate *dicta* all deference is due, speaks of the present English version as the first which had been made of the “Tusculan Questions,” when, in fact, it had been preceded by at least four, and we believe five.

We spoke of the execution of the work in terms much less severe than have been used by our learned Virginia contemporary ; it is useless now to say, that we should have been far better pleased to commend it, could we have done so in good conscience ; but we own, that, by this time, we should have been greatly dissatisfied with ourselves, had we been *left* to applaud a publication, proceeding from our neighbourhood, which, in another quarter, has been made the subject of strictures, as strong as they are well founded ; nor could we have even made out a good case of self-defence, had we been silent respecting so very unsatisfactory an essay, which, if unchallenged in the critical journals, would have been likely to be taken for a specimen of the scholarship of the country.

A controversy upon its merits would not be very entertaining ; but if it were to be prosecuted, we are full sure, that our materials would not soon give out. For a specimen or two let us begin again with the beginning of the treatise ; for really it does not very much matter where we look for examples. Let us turn to the first section of the first book of the original, and to the corresponding part of the translation. There is a sentence in the former, which may be thus united with the sentence which answers to it in the latter. “*Et cum and since, ratio the method, et disciplina and discipline, omnium artium of all arts, quæ which, ad rectam vivendi viam pertinerent relate to the right way of living, contineretur are contained, studio sapientiæ in the study of wisdom, quæ philosophia dicitur, called philosophy, hoc mihi Latinis literis illustrandum putavi, I have thought it my part to illustrate this in our own language.*”

Doubtless there are those, who have heard something very

much like this uttered *vivâ voce*, and, for various good reasons, have found no fault with it ; but in print, there is more time to consider the import of such a version. What, then, is meant by “ the method and discipline of all arts ” ? For, to many minds, this language must convey no very definite idea. “ Ratio ” and “ disciplina ” are undoubtedly the *μέθοδος* and *δύσις* of the Greeks ; but in rendering “ ratio ” when connected with another substantive, as in this case, into English, it is often necessary, in order fully to accommodate the language to our idiom, to vary the phraseology. Cicero says, (*De Fin.* III. 20,) “ Cynicorum autem rationem atque vitam alii cadere in sapientem dicunt,” etc. Here, to translate “ rationem atque vitam ” literally, “ the method and life,” would be a very imperfect representation of the matter. The corresponding English is, the “ system of morals ” or the “ principles of action ” peculiar to the Cynics. “ Ars,” in Latin, is of more extensive application, as commonly used, than “ art ” in English ; and the same is true of the Latin “ sapientia ” compared with the English word “ wisdom.” “ The study of wisdom,” is a phrase, as here used, which suggests rather the idea of the “ act of studying,” than what Cicero intended. We will now attempt a translation of the passage above quoted, which, it is believed, will be found, on comparison, to be a nearer approach to the sense of the original, than that upon which we are commenting. “ And since the fundamental principles of all acquirements connected with a virtuous life are contained in that department of knowledge called philosophy, I have thought,” &c.

Cicero himself, in stating his own practice in translating from the Greek, has laid down the law on this subject. “ Nec tamen exprimi *verbum e verbo* necesse erit, ut interpretes indiseri solent, cum sit verbum, quod idem declaret, *magis usitatum*. Equidem soleo etiam, quod *uno* Græci, si aliter non possum, idem *pluribus verbis* exponere.” (*De Fin.* III. 4.) In the few examples of translation from the Greek, which are found in the works of the great Roman scholar, we discover a rigid adherence to his own precepts. One objection, therefore, to the present translation of the Tusculan Questions is, that the English idiom has not been sufficiently consulted ; and that, in consequence, passages not unfrequently occur, which are partly or wholly unintelligible without a reference to Latin usage. The sentence commented upon above, is an example of what we mean.

But parts of this translation are obscure, not only from want of attention to the difference between the Latin and English idioms, but apparently from an imperfect apprehension of the

meaning of the author, or from a very careless use of language. For an illustration, we will not go beyond this same *first section*. Here, then, we read, "For, as with the Greeks, the most ancient of the learned was the race of poets; at least, if Homer and Hesiod existed prior to the foundation of Rome, and Archilochus during the reign of Romulus. The reception of poetry among us was rather backward; for it was nearly five hundred and ten years," &c. When it is said, "For, as with the Greeks," &c., it would seem, that some comparison is instituted; yet none is apparent in what follows; and the whole extract shows a want of connexion and consecutiveness, which we might venture to say, even without examination, does not belong to Cicero. But we will look at the Latin. "Nam, cum apud Græcos antiquissimum e doctis genus sit poëtarum, siquidem Homerus fuit et Hesiodus ante Romam conditam, Archilochus regnante Romulo; serius poëticam nos accepimus." Which may be thus rendered. "For while among the Greeks, the most ancient class of the learned consisted of the poets, if, indeed, Homer and Hesiod lived before the building of Rome, and Archilochus in the reign of Romulus, poetry among us was received in a later age." The translator, by dividing the sentence, and supposing a period after "Romulo," in the Latin, has perplexed the whole passage, if he has not destroyed its import. These two examples may suffice as specimens, each out of a large number of its kind, of imperfect or erroneous rendering in this version.

It will be observed, that we have barely entered the work. It may be useful, however, to look at one or two passages further on in the volume; as they furnish errors of a new species, that is, in historical allusions. On the eighty-first page of the translation, in a part answering to the forty-sixth section of the original, we read as follows. "Much later still will fame desert Curius, Fabricius, Calatinus, the two Scipios, the two Africans, Maximus, Marcellus, Paullus, Cato, Lælius, innumerable others." The mere English reader might be led, from common use in his language, to understand by the "two Africans," two natives of Africa, and naturally enough ask, who they are. In referring to the Latin text, we find, "duo Africanos." But neither of the Scipios, who had the epithet "Africanus" attached to his name, has ever, we believe, been called in English, Scipio "the African," but Scipio "Africanus"; this honorable attributive being left untranslated. In some modern languages, this distinction may not be observed; in English, it is believed to be abundantly established. It may be remarked, that we have here an example of the necessity of some comment, to render the allusions, which abound in these

dialogues, intelligible to all readers. Cicero, in referring to distinguished individuals in the Roman annals, when writing for the use of his own countrymen, would of course adopt the brief designations commonly employed at the time, and universally understood; but which, in another age, and among another people, need some explanation. Thus, though in the Roman story there are many Scipios mentioned, yet the "duo Scipiones" were most generally understood to mean the two brothers Publius and Cneus Scipio, whom Cicero calls "duo fulmina nostri imperii," and whose exploits and fall in Spain are recorded by Livy, with surpassing beauty and force of language. The two Scipios, so celebrated for their wars in Africa, were the "duo Africani."

Another historical passage, which we just notice, is on the eighty-fourth page of the translation, and in the forty-seventh section of the first book of the Latin. Here we read in the former place, "Cleobis and Biton, the sons of the priestess Argia." In the original for the "priestess Argia," we find "Argia sacerdos," that is, "priestess of Argos;" "Argia" being a national appellative. The name of this priestess was Cydippa.

We do not care to follow up these strictures, but if more are wanted to maintain the judgment which we have passed upon the book, we promise that they shall be forthcoming in no stinted measure. Should the translator proceed with the work which he has begun, and give to the public other philosophical treatises of Cicero, which it seems he has in hand, he has our best wishes that he may present in future a more favorable sample of American scholarship. In the prosecution of his undertaking, the hints we have given may do him some good; they certainly can do him no harm. We fully coincide in opinion with the illustrious scholar, whose letter appears in the preface to the volume, that "a good American translation of all Cicero's works would be a jewel of great price."

NOTE

TO ARTICLE II. OF THE PRESENT NUMBER.

Since the above article was written, an iron steamboat has been launched at Pittsburg, which, if the accounts of it that have been published are to be relied upon, may mark a new era in the history of steam navigation in the West. The whole of the hull of this boat, including the decks, being of iron, of